

Braeme House  
Clinton  
East Feliciana Parish, La.

HABS NO. LA-40

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of Louisiana

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Richard Koch - District Officer  
908 Queen & Crescent Bldg., New Orleans, La.

BRAEME HOUSE

Owner

Mrs. William Bennett (nee Braeme)

Architect

Builder

D. D. Davis; William Langfitt, Contractor

Present Condition

Fair

Number of Stories

One with attic

Material of Construction

Brick, cemented. Originally shingle roof; now tar paper

Other Existing Records

Court Records, East Feliciana Parish  
Court House, Clinton, La.

Additional Data:

In contrast to the French portions of Louisiana is East Feliciana, one of the Florida Parishes added to Louisiana by President Madison in 1810. Settled by Americans, mostly of Scotch Irish extractions, they built at Clinton as their Parish Seat a Greek Revival Town, and in the Braeme House we find a delightful adaption of a residence to a Greek Temple, the ideal of this period. Also are seen the faults of the period, a certain unwieldiness and the attempts of the following generations to add to the house so that it may be made livable according to their standards; these additions, Victorian in feeling are

common in Louisiana and developed a style that in itself is so much of the Greek Revival.

The form of Braeme is a simple Greek Temple with a portico of four Doric columns facing the road and with a pediment whose lines are carried the length of the building. The columns are of cement while the entablature is of wood with the pediment decorated with a flat segmental fanlight. The plan is simple with a hall through the middle and the stair at the end; on each side of the hall are two double rooms separated by large sliding doors; in the attic are two rooms with out ceilings that were used for storage or an overflow of guests or relatives in winter; for in summer they are unlivable. Grouped in the rear is the Kitchen of brick with its squatty cement columns which contrasts with the Well House, a circular shelter with an attenuated Doric order, the columns chamfered posts and a tall conical roof of shingles, (now roofing paper) altogether one of the most delightful of the many types of out buildings so frequent in Louisiana.

The openings are tall with a wide simple trim. The caps over the more important openings are decorated with egg and darts and the rooms have heavy plaster cornices. The stair is a straight run, but circular at the turn and the detail is unusually light for the period, particularly the balusters and the newel.

In the attic were found the original plain wood mantels that had been replaced in recent years. Victorian additions have been added to the East of the house that detract from the simple mass. The front hood

over the door of this addition is similar to ones in the Barbadoes, while the circular hoods over the windows of the rear second story, Gothic Revival in feeling, are amusing examples of this style. The Victorians were practical people, and in a climate where tropical rains are usual in summer, the hoods protect the windows which are left open to ventilate the attic.

The original deed to the land was a donation to Louis Yarborough who sold the property to Jamee Holmes and Susan Boetwick; in a partition the property was transferred to Holmes, who sold it to Mark Boatner, but Boatner not being able to make his payments, the property was seized and sold to D. D. Davis who no doubt commenced the house. According to Book G, Page 539 in the Courthouse at Clinton, William Langfitt bought said property for \$1,600.00 on March 2, 1842, Lots 4 and 5, Square 15 and all improvements including the new brick house being erected by the said D. D. Davis. William Langfitt, a native of Pointe Coupee at that time operated a sawmill in Port Hudson and with John Killian was in business probably as a contractor. The property was bought in 18-- by Braeme and is now owned by Mrs. Wm. Bennett (nee Braeme) a granddaughter.

Descriptive Data - Richard Koch

Water Colors - Boyd Cruise

Approved by

*Richard Koch*

Date December 12, 1940

Richard Koch - District Officer  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
in Louisiana.